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Social development, including questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, disabled persons and the family

Report of the Third Committee

Rapporteur: Ms. Anzhela **Korneliouk** (Belarus)

I. Introduction

1. At its 9th plenary meeting, on 11 September 2000, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in the agenda of its fifty-fifth session the item entitled "Social development, including questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, disabled persons and the family" and to allocate it to the Third Committee.

2. The Third Committee considered the item jointly with item 104 at its 3rd to 7th and 17th meetings, on 25, 26 and 28 September and on 10 October 2000. An account of the Committee's discussion is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.3/55/SR. 3-7 and 17).

3. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the following documents:

(a) Relevant section of the report of the Economic and Social Council for 2000 (A/55/3);[1]

(b) Report of the Secretary-General on the follow-up to the International Year of Older Persons (A/55/167);

(c) Letter dated 5 May 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Nigeria to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly, transmitting the Declaration and the Programme of Action adopted by the South Summit of the Group of 77, held at Havana from 10 to 14 April 2000 (A/55/74);

[1] To be issued in *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 3* (A/55/3/Rev.1).

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(d) Letter dated 28 June 2000 from the Permanent Representatives of Egypt and Indonesia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the joint communiqué of the Tenth Summit of the Group of Fifteen, held at Cairo on 19 and 20 June 2000 (A/55/139-E/2000/93);

(e) Letter dated 1 August 2000 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the communiqué Okinawa 2000 adopted by the Group of Eight on 23 July 2000 (A/55/257-S/2000/766);

(f) Overview of the *2000 Report on the World Social Situation* (E/2000/9).

4. At the 3rd meeting, on 25 September, the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs addressed the Committee (see A/C.3/55/SR.3).

5. At the same meeting, the Director of the Division for Social Policy and Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs made an introductory statement (see A/C.3/ 55/SR.3).

6. Also at the same meeting, a statement was made by the Chief of the Programme on Ageing of the Division for Social Policy and Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (see A/C.3/ 55/SR.3).

II. Consideration of draft resolution A/C.3/55/L.2

7. By its resolution 2000/25, the Economic and Social Council recommended to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution entitled "International Year of Volunteers". The draft resolution was reproduced in document A/C.3/55/L.2.

8. At its 17th meeting, on 10 October, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.3/55/L.2 without a vote (see para. 9).

III. Recommendation of the Third Committee

9. The Third Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

International Year of Volunteers

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 52/17 of 20 November 1997, in which it proclaimed the year 2001 as the International Year of Volunteers, and also recalling Economic and Social Council resolution 1997/44 of 22 July 1997,

Recalling also the outcome document of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly,[2] entitled "World Summit for Social Development and beyond: achieving social development for all in a globalizing world", held at Geneva in June 2000, in which the General Assembly recommended the promotion

[2] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-fourth Special Session, Supplement No. 3* (A/S-24/8/Rev. 1), chap. 3.

of the involvement of volunteers in social development, inter alia, by encouraging Governments, taking into account the views of all actors, to develop comprehensive strategies and programmes by raising public awareness about the value and opportunities of voluntarism and by facilitating an enabling environment for individuals and other actors of civil society to engage in, and the private sector to support, voluntary activities,

Welcoming the decision of the Commission for Social Development, at its thirty-eighth session, to include the subject of volunteering in the provisional agenda for its thirty-ninth session,[3]

Taking into account the valuable contribution of volunteering to both economic and social development,

Bearing in mind that volunteering is one of the important ways in which people participate in societal development,

1. *Welcomes* the activities undertaken by States, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations and the United Nations system for the promotion of volunteerism and, specifically, in preparation for the observance of the International Year of Volunteers, and encourages them to continue their efforts;

2. *Calls upon* States to promote, especially during the Year, an environment conducive to the discussion, at national and local levels, of the characteristics and trends of volunteer action in their own societies, including the major challenges which the Year can help to address, and to incorporate the subject of volunteering into high-level and other meetings and events during 2001;

3. *Invites* States to consider all means available for more people to become involved in voluntary action and to be drawn from a broader cross-section of society, especially from groups, including young people, older people and people with disabilities, in view of the benefits accruing to volunteers through volunteer action;

4. *Encourages* Governments, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, eminent persons and other relevant actors to take all possible measures to promote volunteer action, especially during the Year, in particular at the local level, and in cooperation with, inter alia, local authorities, community leaders, the media and schools;

5. *Encourages* organizations of the United Nations system to pay attention to the Year in their regular work and in their relevant meetings and to continue to collaborate with the United Nations Volunteers programme as focal point for the Year to ensure that the contributions of volunteers in their own areas of concern are fully recognized;

6. *Requests* the Commission for Social Development to make appropriate suggestions and recommendations to the General Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council, to further the contribution of volunteering to social development;

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[3] See *Official Records Economic and Social Council, 2000, Supplement No. 6* and corrigendum (E/2000/26 and Corr. 1), chap. I, sect. B.

7. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit his note[4] transmitting the contribution of the United Nations Volunteers programme to the preparations for the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly, entitled "World Summit for Social Development and beyond: achieving social development for all in a globalizing world", as a document of the thirty-ninth session of the Commission for Social Development, and requests him, furthermore, to disseminate it widely within the United Nations system, including by making it available to the Commission on Human Settlements acting as the preparatory committee for the special session of the General Assembly for an overall review and appraisal of the Habitat Agenda, the preparatory committee for the special session of the General Assembly for follow-up to the World Summit for Children, the preparatory committee for the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance and the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-fifth session;

8. *Decides* that two plenary meetings of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly shall be devoted to volunteering, to coincide with the close of the International Year of Volunteers on 5 December 2001, and in this regard requests the Secretary-General to prepare a report on ways Governments and the United Nations system could support volunteering for discussion on that occasion;

9. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session on the outcome of the International Year of Volunteers and its follow-up.

[4] A/AC.253/16/Add.7.